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ABSTRACT

This compilation of materials about integration/inclusion of children with special needs in regular education programs includes vignettes describing students' successful inclusion experiences and information on resources. The summaries of individual cases were based on interviews which explored motivations for inclusion, key players and their roles, and the benefits and drawbacks of general education. The four stories of successful integration cover the kindergarten, early elementary, upper elementary, and middle school levels. Fifteen themes characterizing successful integration efforts are identified. Appendices include: definitions on full inclusion, least restrictive environment (LRE) mainstreaming, and intgration; information to help in understanding the key legal reguirements for LRE; a list of inclusion strategies for teachers; seven criteria for integration; a checklist of indicators of full inclusion; "Inclusive School Communities...for Students with Disabilities: Ten Reasons Why"; and information on the Parent-Educator Connection Program in Iowa. Bibliographic information and annotations are provided for: 11 manuals, reports, and papers; 5 articles; 11 books; 5 videos; 1 catalog; and 3 resources used to compile the annotations. Seventeen resource organizations and addresses are also listed. (SW)

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Successful Integration Through Home-School Partnerships

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Introduction

I have always been fascinated by the issue of integration/inclusion. My daughter with special needs has been mainstreamed since pre-kindergarten. My family is intimately aware of the pros and cons of placing a student with special needs in the general education setting. Because of my experiences and my interest in all students with challenges, I was delighted to play a role in putting together the "successful integration" summaries.

Each story is the end result of a series of interviews conducted with people directly involved with students who actively participate in general education. As I began meeting these key players, my enthusiasm for the project began to build. Each individual had an interesting story to relay and their heartfelt commitment to this inclusive endeavor came through loud and clear. I appreciated everyone's honesty and candid approach to the discussion. No one pretended the process was easy, and all admitted the challenges were ongoing. The majority, however, clearly felt the struggle was with great reward and worth all the effort.

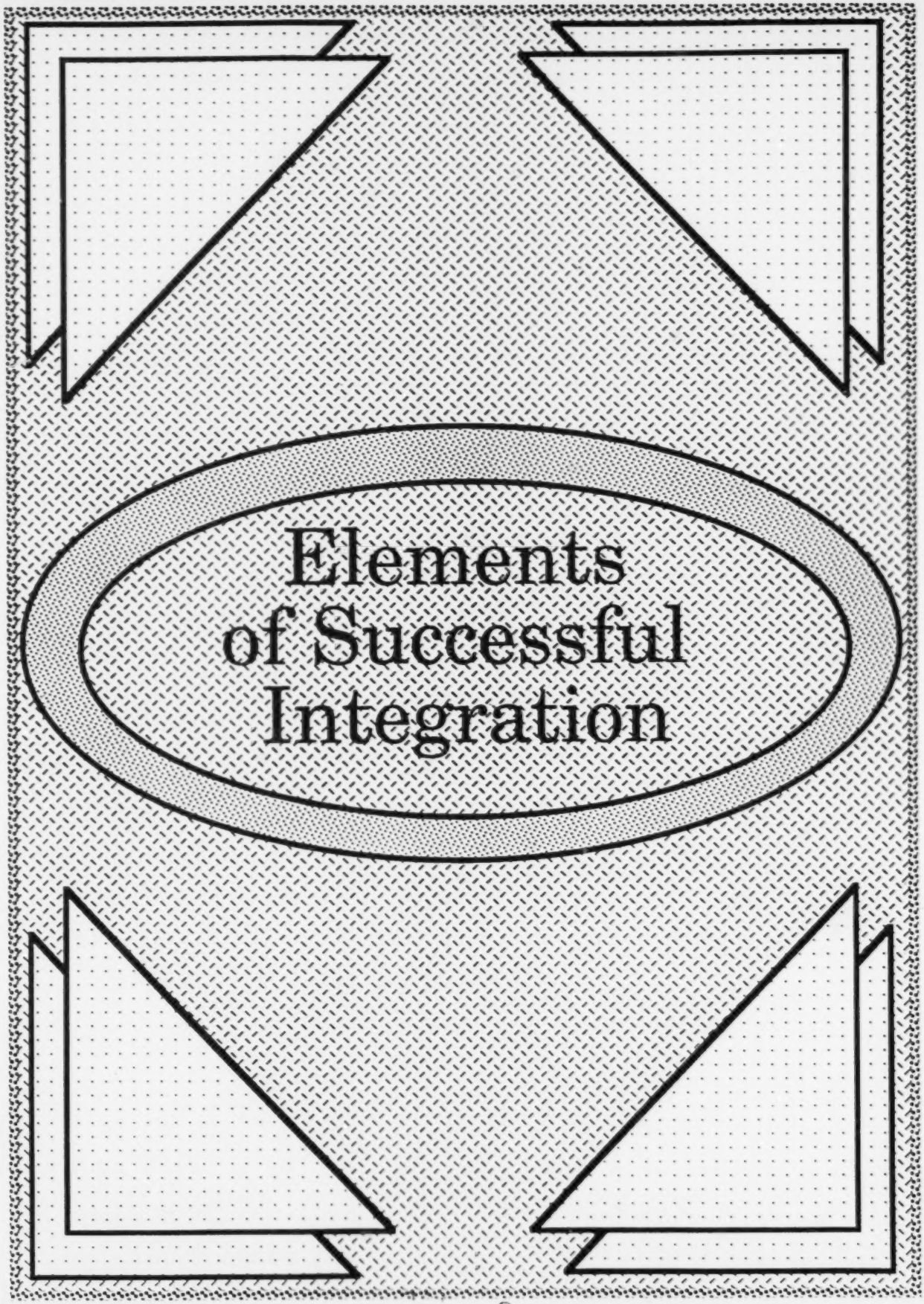
Prior to the interviews, Paula Linnevold,previously a Parent Coordinator with Northern Trails Area Education Agency, and I brainstormed questions designed to elicit targeted information. I appreciate Paula's significant contribution to generating questions which enabled me to get at the heart of the stories. The questions were designed to identify who initiated the process that led to inclusion and what motivated them to do so, how the sequence of events began, who the key players were, the roles of the key players, how challenges were met, the benefits of general education, the drawbacks to the placement, and what each learned from the process.

Integration/inclusion is exciting and frightening at the same time. The methods used to achieve integration vary as much as the students who are involved. The decision of whether or not to involve a student in general education and at what level is highly personal for families. While most people acknowledge the advantages of appropriate role models, families know too well the risks to be encountered and the high level of energy such an endeavor can take. Barb Johnson of Des Moines, for whom I have a great deal of respect, spoke with me about her choice to have her son attend a segregated facility. The fact that her son " can look in the mirror and smile at himself everyday" because "his self-esteem is very secure from being in a completely positive atmosphere at school" is more than enough proof to the Johnsons that the placement is appropriate. The Johnson family affords Bryce ample opportunity outside of school to participate in the "real world" and a segregated placement provides him with the true "individualized" attention he needs. These statements are certainly food for thought and serve to emphasize how individual and personal the program decision is for each family and team. For families whose children's situations allow more flexibility, I continue to believe the family should be encouraged and supported in broadening the educational experiences of their children.

A significant goal of this project was to relay stories which highlighted the basics of integration/inclusion while identifying both the variances and similarities found in the individual scenarios. I discovered, as the interviews progressed, that each story had such unique components that they could not be summarized into neat little packages and did not fit the planned format. Instead, I chose to include the bulk of the interviews to allow the full picture to be painted for the reader.

While each story had unique characteristics, the similarities were also numerous. As you read about Kimo, Ronald, B.J. and Brendan, look for the themes, described on pages 11 and 12.

-- *Barbara Crawford, Parent Coordinator*
Heartland AEA 11
September, 1993


Elements
of Successful
Integration

What Made These Integration Efforts Successful?

The following are themes that appeared in more than one of the four stories and may have contributed to the success of these integration efforts. When planning for integration, parents and educators might ask if their approach is consistent with these themes.

-- Administrators were involved in planning for the integration efforts from the beginning. They supported the philosophy of full inclusion/integration. Team members kept administrators informed of the successes and concerns.

-- The efforts started on a small basis and started slowly. Successful inclusion/integration of a student did not happen "overnight."

-- A team approach was used. Educators believed that the parents were an important part of the team in planning inclusion experiences. Parents also felt that they were an important part of the team and were willing to make suggestions and share ideas. Both the parents and educators were willing to work together, talk with each other and problem solve.

-- Training was provided to the faculty and staff in the school before the integration efforts began.

-- Students who did not have disabilities received information about students with differences who might soon be part of their class.

-- The team members were willing to try something new; they were open to suggestions and willing to take risks.

-- The team members were flexible. If one approach did not work, they developed another and another. They looked at what the student needed and did not fall into the trap that, "that is the way we have always done it."

-- The team did not let little problems develop into big ones. When a problem arose, they tried to deal with it right away and didn't wait until it was a major problem. They monitored the situation carefully with phone calls, communication logs, monthly or informal meetings and so on.

-- The team acknowledged that inclusion/integration efforts may be emotionally draining for all involved--the student, the parents and the educators. They had other people to go to for support or who acted as "sounding boards."

-- The associates that were hired communicated well with the students, the parents and the teachers.

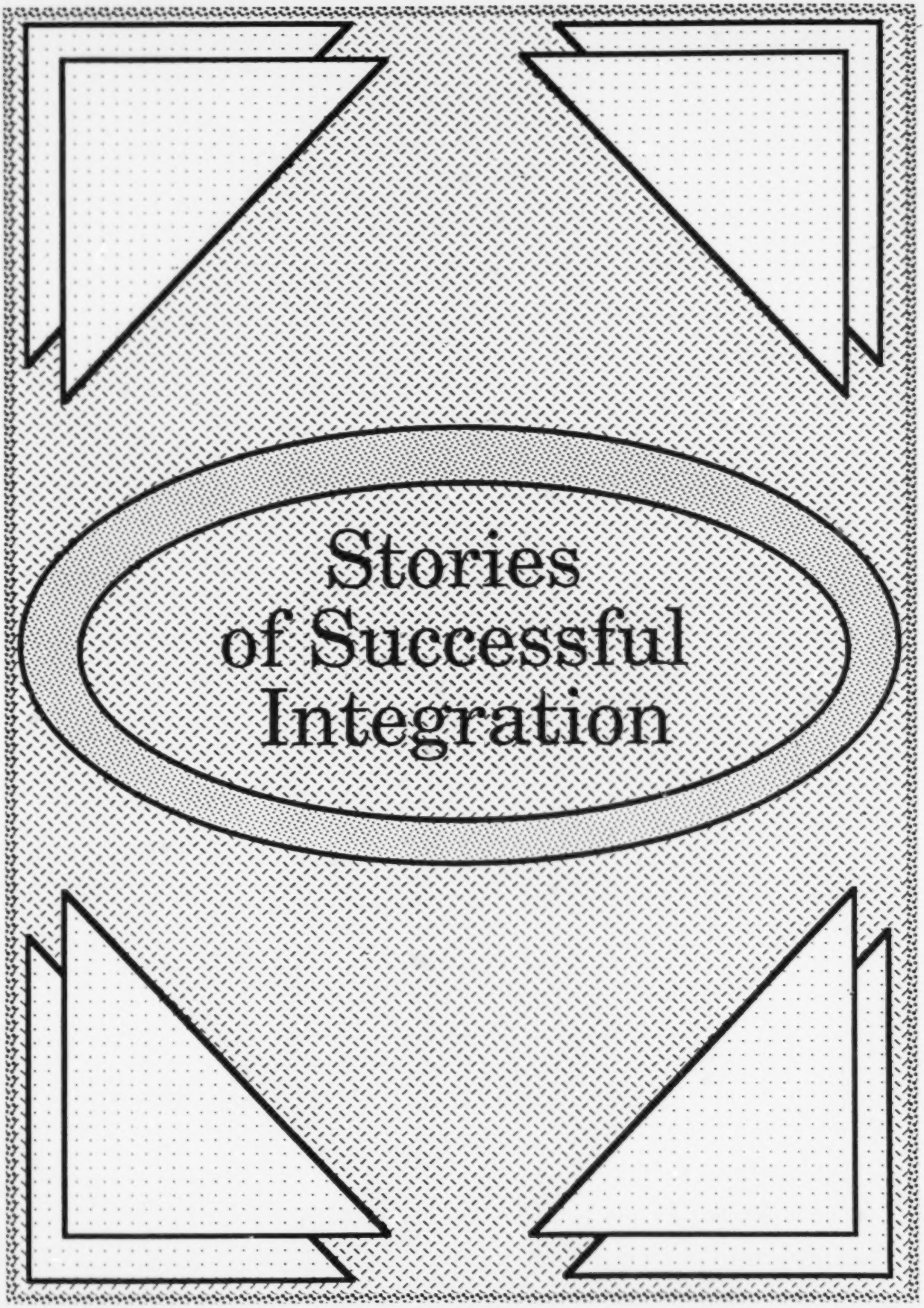
-- Teacher selection was made carefully. Some teachers are more receptive to integration than others. Selecting one who was more receptive was decided as the best place to start.

-- Both the parents and educators trusted themselves and their instincts about individual children and what would work for them.

-- The parents were informed about integration and full inclusion. They talked with other parents and educators, attended conferences and read articles. They understood the options that were available.

-- The parents did NOT believe in waiting for the "perfect" time or waiting for their child to "catch up" with the other children before asking that he/she be integrated into a general education class.

-- Educators were willing to communicate with each other.


Stories
of Successful
Integration

Successful Integration Through Home-School Partnerships
Kindergarten Level

by
Barbara Crawford, Parent Coordinator, Heartland AEA 11

Brendan Stiles, a five and one-half year old boy with a diagnosis of autism, attends a regular kindergarten class in the mornings and an early childhood special education class in the afternoons at Mark Twain Elementary School in Iowa City.

Initially, Brendan's mother, Tricia Stiles, did not know a great deal about inclusion and was not aware that it could be an option for her son. After reading articles by the Stainbacks and Marsha Forest, she became convinced that integration was worth pursuing for her child.

Lesa Ackman, early childhood special education teacher at Mark Twain, has taught Brendan for three years. She started Brendan on his "inclusion journey," by first talking with Grant Wood Area Education Agency (AEA) 10 consultants about integration possibilities for Brendan.

One of the first steps in Brendan's journey occurred when an AEA consultant found a day care center that was willing to include children with special needs. Lesa and Tricia thought that having Brendan attend an integrated day care would be a good move. Brendan began attending the day care in the mornings while spending the afternoons in Ms. Ackman's early childhood special education class.

To ensure success at the day care center, both Lesa and Tricia worked with the child care providers to anticipate and provide solutions to problems before they occurred. Keeping one step ahead gave the providers a comfort level that prevented the situation from feeling unmanageable. The day Brendan returned home from the day care and asked for "big boy pants" (after his mother had been struggling for ages with toilet training), Tricia realized just how much influence the other children at the day care center had on her son. This gave her an inkling of the progress Brendan might make if he had consistent exposure to children who had age-appropriate skills. In earlier years, a great deal of time was spent in the special education classroom having Brendan attempt to write his name. After one week at the integrated day care center, he was successful in doing so. These successes encouraged Lesa and Tricia to think about other integration opportunities at Mark Twain to provide Brendan with stimulating learning situations within the general education setting.

To set the wheels in motion, Lesa first spoke with the building administrators about Brendan and how he could benefit from the world beyond her special education classroom. She approached the administrators slowly, providing information over time and in a casual manner, allowing them to see the possible advantages of a general education classroom for Brendan. Tricia worked to expand her knowledge of integration and inclusion by attending numerous

conferences and reading additional resource materials. She also joined an Inclusion Task Force that had started in AEA 10.

After a time, the many discussions Lesa and Tricia had with the school administrators resulted in a decision to enroll Brendan in Ann Murphy's morning kindergarten class in the fall of 1992. Before school started, Lesa met with Ms. Murphy and presented her with an overview of the objectives for Brendan, stressing both social and developmental academic goals.

Brendan's first day of school was two weeks later than the other children in the classroom. His delayed start was at the request of Ms. Murphy. She made this request because she was concerned about how large the class was. She wanted to give the other children a chance to "settle" into the kindergarten routine themselves, so they would feel secure and be better able to welcome Brendan into the class.

The initial plan was to have Brendan attend kindergarten only a few mornings a week. However, his first day was so successful that he attends regularly. His afternoons are spent in Lesa's special education classroom where he receives speech therapy, works on his computer and fine motor skills, and has a chance for quiet time.

The first two weeks of school either Lesa or an associate was with Brendan in the kindergarten classroom. After that initial period, no special education support personnel were consistently in the classroom. Lesa and her associate continue to help out on occasion at recess time. Mingling with the children during recess gives them a chance to become better acquainted with all the children and lets them monitor Brendan's interactions. On the playground they guide Brendan's classmates in motivating him to play. Brendan may turn down offers to play from his classmates to avoid social interactions. When that happens Lesa or the associate encourages the classmate to invite Brendan to play a second time and to gently convince Brendan to join in. Lesa sometimes casually reminds Brendan's classmates of how it feels to be left out, suggesting games or activities that are manageable for Brendan.

In the kindergarten classroom, Brendan is expected to learn both academic and social skills. Lesa and Ann work together often. Such collaboration has decreased as the year has gone on and Ann feels comfortable with Brendan's needs. She provides Lesa with weekly lesson plans and identifies the curriculum areas where she feels she will need assistance. Together they determine what accommodations, if any, need to be made. Ann also meets regularly throughout the year with Tricia. Tricia tries to keep directly in touch with the Brendan's classroom situation by helping in the class on Monday mornings.

Lesa or the associate also encourage peer interaction between Brendan and his classmates as the opportunity presents itself, much in the same way as they do on the playground. Cooperative learning is widely used and promotes interaction among the children.

A "Circle of Friends" approach can be beneficial but Lesa felt the half-day kindergarten situation would not allow enough time to begin the process, particularly when things were going well. Instead, the school guidance counselor, Ms. Murphy and Lesa work with the class on conflict resolution skills. They use examples of actual situations that have caused difficulties between the children such as problems in sharing, taking turns and hurting feelings by leaving someone out of a game. The adults first role play the correct way to act and then help the students to practice the situation. The conflict resolution lessons include pointers on talking with each other, maintaining eye contact, the use of "I" messages to relay feelings, and how to let another person respond and share his/her feelings. All the students benefit and these skills help them know how to interact with Brendan.

Brendan's mother also promotes and encourages friendships by inviting his classmates over to their home.

Since attending kindergarten, Brendan is learning to socialize better with other children and is becoming independent in his personal care; which his mother attributes to the modeling and motivation provided by the other children.

Lesa's advice to other teachers and to parents who are interested in integrating students is to listen to their gut feelings for each child and to act upon those feelings. She cautions that getting started can be the hardest step because the process can appear overwhelming. The process is not the same for each child and is pretty much a "learn as you go" endeavor, she says. She encourages others to obtain as much information as possible and to move forward with an open mind. "Educators and parents delving into this process must be confident enough to lead." Lesa also suggests that as educators and parents take steps or add something new to a child's program, they share that with the principal and other educators and parents in the building. Allowing others to share in what is happening makes them feel a part of the situation and confirms to them the value of integration.

In Lesa's opinion, one of the obstacles and challenges is the confusion which often times surrounds the specific responsibilities of the educators involved. Additionally, some teachers still try to fit the child into all facets of the classroom when that is not feasible or even expected. Lesa also thinks the issue of class size will have to be addressed in the future to support the educators who are meeting the additional needs of a child with a disability.

Lesa stresses that communication among parents and educators is essential in making integration work. Each party should be encouraged to discuss problems immediately and openly to prevent uneasy situations from festering and growing.

The Stiles family has always wanted Brendan to attend his neighborhood school, Longfellow, with his older sister. The family knows the teachers and children there and feels it would be natural to send Brendan to Longfellow. Ironically, Brendan is doing so well at Mark Twain that the plan to move him to his

neighborhood school next year is met with some hesitation by his parents. However, plans for Brendan's transition to his neighborhood school have begun.

Tricia has met with the principal at Longfellow, Marian Coleman, many times to plan for Brendan's arrival. Together they selected a first grade teacher who they thought would work well with Brendan and approached her about having Brendan in her class. The teacher agreed and met with Ann Murphy to discuss Brendan's progress. She also observed Brendan in Ann's class.

At the staffing, Tricia brought copies of reports from all of Brendan's general education teachers at Mark Twain, including music, gym and media. She did this to alleviate any fears his new teachers might have about how he would act in those settings.

As it turned out, the "best laid plans" did not work. The first grade teacher and principal both left Longfellow before the new school year started. Mrs. Coleman did meet with the new principal and explained the plans they had for Brendan. According to Tricia, the new principal seems to share the same philosophy about inclusion as the last principal, so she feels confident that the family will have his support.

Mrs. Coleman visited with Tricia several times during the summer to discuss who should be Brendan's new teacher. With her encouragement, Tricia called the teacher who had recently been hired to teach first grade at Longfellow. The new teacher has observed Brendan at daycare during the summer so she could see him in an "inclusive setting." She has also spent several hours talking with Tricia and is very enthusiastic about having Brendan in her class.

"I think we are on the right path for Brendan," Tricia says. "We'll keep learning along with him about how to best support him and his teachers on this journey."

Successful Integration Through Home-School Partnerships
The Early Elementary Level

"HELLO MRS. ELEPHANT"

by
Barbara Crawford, Parent Coordinator, Heartland AEA 11

Overview

Hanawalt Elementary School, situated in the heart of Des Moines, houses approximately 370 students from preschool through fifth grade. Last year Mrs. Brents Oliphant taught 28 children in her first grade class. Among those children was Ronald Autry, an outgoing and cheerful 8 year-old boy, who is very knowledgeable about airplanes. Ronald has autism.

Originally, the parent of another student with special needs introduced the idea of integrating children at Hanawalt, to Mrs. Helen Oliver, the principal. Ronald's own journey began earlier when his parents, Sally Pederson and Jim Autry, enrolled Ronald into the Des Moines Science Center's regular preschool. They enlisted the assistance of the Des Moines Preschool Integration Facilitator, who monitored Ronald's activities. Sally and Jim felt Ronald benefited from the experience because of the positive behaviors modeled by his peers. Ronald learned the simple rules of a preschool class such as where to sit at what time, how to pass out cookies to other classmates, how to sit still to participate, and so on. These concrete examples of how to "behave" were important for Ronald's development. By the time Ronald entered kindergarten at Hanawalt, he was established as a student in the community and was included in birthday parties and other social events. Because his preschool arrangement provided a positive experience for Ronald, the early elementary team was open to having Ronald attend regular kindergarten half days, with the other half day spent in the special education classroom. Then last year, after careful consideration and planning, Ronald began full time in Mrs. Oliphant's first grade classroom.

The Philosophy

The educators on Ronald's team all stated that parents are appropriate and important advocates for their children because parents know their children best. The educational team members were comfortable listening to the wishes of Ronald's parents and taking the necessary steps to implement the inclusion plan. Everyone interviewed also felt it is imperative that parents be flexible, open minded and honest about their children's needs.

The concept of integration attracted Mrs. Oliver. She approaches education with the attitude that schools must strive to develop all students into well-rounded citizens. Mrs. Oliver states "learning to be an 'active citizen' in our society is the school's role; our role is multi-faceted and not just to teach reading, math and writing. Society is made up of all kinds of children and schools are not to 'sort' children. In the regular classroom children with special needs have a variety of

role models and have an opportunity to behave more typically and become more independent. All children in the classroom learn about the diversity of people." Additionally, Mrs. Oliver mentions, "the teaching techniques for Ronald are not that different from the techniques used with all students."

The School

Hanawalt is Ronald's neighborhood school, the one he would automatically attend if he did not require special education. The teacher and grade levels, not the students, identify all classrooms. For example, the self-contained classroom for students who have autism is not labeled the "autism room" it is the K-5 classroom or Ms. Ross' classroom. Integration occurs for all students during lunch, recess and school programs.

The Team Members

Ronald's educators and parents all emphasized that the key to successful integration is the selection and approach to both the general education classroom teacher and the associate. The selection process for Ronald began with Mrs. Oliver, the administrator, speaking with the parents and Ronald's special education teacher, Mary Pat Ross. They talked about Ronald's personality and characteristics to determine the type of teaching style under which Ronald would work best. They also considered the classroom size and makeup, as well as Ronald's classroom peers. The team members all feel that one should approach teachers positively and present the concept of integration as an exciting, career-expanding challenge. They believe educator resistance can be avoided by starting small and by ensuring the availability of a multi-faceted support system. Mrs. Ross emphasizes the importance of the approach used when initiating integration in a school setting. "Teachers should be comfortable with the concept and aware that it means more than the child being an observer in the classroom. Regular education teachers should be assured they will have adequate support. They should be made aware of the benefits of collaborating with special education teachers for all their students."

Mrs. Oliphant assumed Ronald would be integrated into first grade so she was not surprised when she was approached by the principal. Mrs. Oliphant's only hesitations centered on her doubts about her abilities to teach a student with autism and her uncertainty that she could meet the high expectations held for Ronald. At first she optimistically hoped to find the key that would unlock the doors of the world for Ronald. As time went on she realized that while such a goal was unrealistic for Ronald, the classroom arrangement was working to his advantage. The challenge to Mrs. Oliphant in the classroom was the constant struggle to divide her time fairly among all the students.

Sue Irish, Ronald's associate, had worked in Hanawalt's library before being approached by Mrs. Oliver with the "neat challenge" of assisting Ronald in the classroom. Mrs. Irish was familiar with Ronald as a student of the school,

providing a more natural transition to working with him in class. Mrs. Irish contends that her years of experience as an educator and, what is more important, life's experiences in general, provided her with a philosophy that fit the situation. She accepted the position with an open mind and wanted to "be filled with information." She also knew it was imperative that she be flexible and able to adjust to the inherent changes that would take place. Her early fears revolved around her lack of knowledge about autism, the expectations of Ronald's team, and the unknown element of working closely with the classroom teacher who happened to be a friend. She found along the way that her natural instinct was to "mother" Ronald but Mrs. Oliphant helped her identify those times and Mrs. Irish learned to "facilitate" Ronald's activities rather than direct them. Mrs. Irish's openness to suggestions and constructive criticism from the general and special education teachers clearly was to Ronald's advantage. A person who finds it difficult to be a team player and who is not open to suggestions is unable to provide the necessary support to a child who is being integrated. When Mrs. Irish became frustrated it was important for her to be able to use another associate or a school counselor as a sounding board to provide confirmation of her efforts or to redirect her. Mrs. Irish felt that working with Ronald was a rewarding experience, and that it has had a positive impact on her views of life, as well as "stretched" her. She looks forward to working with Ronald again in the upcoming school year.

Sally Pederson, Ronald's mother, first seriously considered integrating Ronald after speaking with another parent of a child with autism. Up to that point Sally had operated with the idea that Ronald had to "catch up" before he could join the regular classroom. This parent mentioned that teachers could adapt curriculum to Ronald's needs and that Ronald would benefit from "normal" activities. This parent assured Sally that Ronald could learn according to his style, having an opportunity at the same time to develop critical long-term social skills. Learning side by side with "typical" children would allow Ronald to learn how to get along with a variety of people and how to respond to them appropriately. These skills are essential to help Ronald maintain a job, live with a roommate, or have a relationship with another person. Additionally, it is important that he not only learn basic reading, writing, and math skills, but that he is able to apply these skills to everyday life. Sally felt strongly about the need for monthly meetings and was an integral part of the planning for Ronald. When Ronald was having difficulty writing numbers in math, Sally suggested the use of number stamps. All team members provided ideas and adaptations along the way, making Ronald's education a true team effort. Sally feels success in Ronald's situation depends on flexibility and the ability and willingness of the parties to work together to find solutions. In the beginning it was her intent to set the tone of openness and flexibility so the educators would not feel threatened or defensive. Her participation in
school activities such as PTA demonstrates her concern for all students, hopefully showing other parents that they should share a similar concern for Ronald.

Mary Pat Ross teaches the self-contained classroom of students with autism at Hanawalt. Her role has been vital to the success of Ronald's inclusion. When

her program first arrived at Hanawalt three years ago, she went from classroom to classroom and discussed the diversity of children to prepare the students and faculty for students with "more noticeable differences." Mrs. Ross used a book developed by kids locally, and talked about the general differences of all children. She gave illustrations such as how some children become more excited than others over things and how that was acceptable. She also discussed the variety of preferences all people have but also what everyone shares. The overall message to the students was that "being unique is okay and it is also okay to try to help 'especially unique' people to be more like you."

Reverse integration was also used. Last year every general education class in the building went into Mrs. Ross' class to participate in different activities as peers and peer tutors. Six students from each class were chosen weekly, usually as a reward for good behavior. Most kids liked to go and the interaction was beneficial to all the students. This system provided additional consistent opportunities for the general education students to become better acquainted with the students in the special education classroom by working together.

The I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan)

Ronald's IEP related significantly to the development of social skills, including interactions with his peers, the associate, and the teacher. To facilitate this development many different approaches were taken. One example is the way in which Ronald's associate handled recess. Prior to leaving the building for recess, Mrs. Irish would cue Ronald on his behavior. She would ask him whom he would play with and what he would do. She moved him through the thought process, including his development of alternative plans if his initial plans did not work. At the end of the year when the class was preparing for a field trip to an unfamiliar area, Ronald was spoken to about the trip and assured that if he found himself "having a hard time" that it was acceptable for him to remove himself and find a place to sit for a while. Another IEP goal was for Ronald to learn to take turns during conversation, in board games, on the playground and other appropriate times.

Strategies for Collaboration and Communication

From the beginning, open communication methods were established. The IEP was written to establish monthly meetings for the parents, the general classroom teacher, the special education classroom teacher, the associate, and others as appropriate. A crucial part of the decision to include Ronald in a general first grade was the agreement by all parties to watch the situation closely and to meet regularly to monitor and discuss Ronald's progress. This proactive approach was an important step in keeping ahead of any troublesome situations. In fact, about midway through the school year, at one of the monthly meetings, Mrs. Ross approached Ronald's mother and the other team members about her concern over Ronald's delay in moving forward academically, particularly in reading. Mrs. Ross felt part of the problem could have been a result of the distractions of the regular classroom. The team agreed to move Ronald into Mrs. Ross' class for some time each morning. Ronald's time in Mrs. Ross's classroom would provide

him better one-on-one concentration in reading, along with more intense practice on language and fine motor skills. Another advantage was the availability of more computer time, which will continue to be important to Ronald's learning. The smaller classroom gave Ronald more opportunities to participate and be in front of the class. Ronald was also reminded each day of his goals and was more focused when he joined Mrs. Oliphant's classroom later each morning. Mrs. Oliphant and Mrs. Irish appreciated this additional support in assisting Ronald in his reading and recognized that there was a general sharing of responsibility for his learning.

An ongoing, fairly informal approach of spontaneous "hallway meetings" also supported the efforts of all involved. It is the view of the principal that all issues do not all call for full program review meetings and that a day-to day informal approach is much more effective and timely. Planning for Ronald was done as it was for all students with special needs and was not blown out of proportion. Mrs. Oliver states that "If a student has a broken arm, their needs will be addressed and adaptations made. The same applies to students with differing needs such as Ronald."

Inservice/Training

The Des Moines system provided training to special education associates. Mrs. Irish found this extremely helpful and appreciated the contact with other associates and the access to her own peer group. Mrs. Irish also observed Mrs. Ross's approach to Ronald and discussed various matters with her throughout the year.

The Hanawalt faculty received a great deal of training at the time the class for students with autism was moved to Hanawalt three years ago. The students also received information about students with disabilities. However, this information was presented in the context of "all children are different or unique." For example, part of the curriculum at Hanawalt includes a year long study of conflict resolution. During one of the units, the students study diversity. Sally Pederson and two other parents modified the unit on diversity to include information on disabilities.

The consensus of Ronald's team members was that it is important not to highlight the differences in children identified with special needs, but rather to include those differences subtly in an overall approach to teaching about the diversity of the human race as a whole. Mrs. Oliver feels the best inservice happens naturally, in the hallway, out on the playground, and in the classroom. All the team members feel that providing information to faculty and students about differences provides the foundation for understanding and success.

Ronald's Gains

By the end of the school year, Ronald was more social with his classmates and had more friends. He was willing and able to approach his peers and address each of them by their full names. The year-long focus on social skills included

practicing the proper way to greet people before launching into a conversation. Mrs. Oliphant knew this goal had been met when Ronald greeted her each morning with a resounding "Hello Mrs. Elephant!" Ronald became relaxed enough to act out a little like the other children. Overall he was learning more appropriate behavior and was better able to relate to the other children. He learned to present his creative stories to the class. Academically he exhibited a fine grasp of geometry and, with the assistance of the one-on-one contact in the special education classroom, was gaining in reading and math skills. Additionally, the consistent work on his handwriting showed positive results.

Successful Integration Through Home-School Partnerships
Upper Elementary Level

by
Barbara Crawford, Parent Coordinator, Heartland AEA 11

Flexibility is what makes integration work for fourteen year old Kimo Staker. Kimo attends his neighborhood school in Tama. He has a severe mental disability, autism, cerebral palsy and a complex seizure disorder. During the 1990-91 school year, Kimo traveled by bus to Marshalltown, where he was integrated only into lunch and one recess period. Because of the unacceptability of the overall classroom situation there Lynne, Kimo's mother, decided to search for alternatives. She confided in the family doctor regarding her concerns and the doctor intervened by contacting the Tama superintendent and recommending that Kimo not return to the Marshalltown classroom. This telephone call opened the door for the Staker family.

After the initial phone call, there were still several hurdles to overcome. The first hurdle was placement staffing. Lynne believed that if they moved Kimo, the move should be directly to his home school. Kimo's team suggested a combination of two days at the neighborhood school and three days in the special classroom in Marshalltown. During the discussion Lynne questioned the team on what they felt Kimo needed. They were unable to give a specific response. The educator's hesitation about such a drastic change for a student with Kimo's needs is not uncommon, in Lynne's opinion. Educators often feel protective of children and are less willing to take risks parents are sometimes ready to take. Since the team could not agree at the spring staffing, the Director of Special Education for AEA 6 requested a review of records. The review was conducted and the team reconvened two weeks later.

The team continued to express concern over meeting Kimo's needs because of the many challenges resulting from his condition. Lynne requested that a personal aide be made available to Kimo to enable him to participate more fully in the classroom and to prevent disruptive behavior. The team was more open to integration when they learned that Lynne's goals for Kimo were not necessarily academic. With this is mind they agreed to a 30 day trial period.

Kimo's first day of school was in October of 1991. The team purposely delayed his start to allow the school a full month of preparation. Deb Scott Miller and Sue Baker, both educational consultants from the University of Iowa, conducted extensive inservice training in Iowa City with the building principal, classroom teacher, aide from general education class, and the special education coordinator. Those who attended the inservice training also visited Hansen Elementary School, in Cedar Falls, to see the school's integrated classrooms. Following the out-of-district visits, inservice training was conducted with the entire staff of the school. Deb Scott Miller talked to the group specifically about Kimo. Among other things, she addressed his health and what they could generally expect from him. She emphasized the need for people to address Kimo and that everyone who came in contact with him should acknowledge him in

some way. Ms. Miller also met with Kimo's team. Sue Baker, from Iowa City, and Jenny Moravec, from Hansen Elementary School in Cedar Falls, spent a week going to each class and speaking with each staff member.

While the school was preparing, Mr. and Mrs. Staker and Kimo visited the school off and on during September, varying the times of their visits during the school day. These visits allowed them to observe the third, fourth and fifth grade classes. In the end, they requested that Kimo be included in a combination class consisting of resource, Chapter 1 and at-risk children. One of the attractions of the room was that the students were team taught, with Mrs. Shirley Young as one of the two teachers. This year Mrs. Young teaches the students in the self-contained with integration (SCI) class and also acts as Kimo's supervising teacher. Although he is not technically a student in her SCI class, her room serves as his home base, the foundation of his program.

Following the initial inservices, Deb Scott Miller telephoned Mrs. Young weekly to consult on Kimo's program. She made return visits to meet with Mrs. Young and assisted in solving specific problems Kimo was experiencing in the integrated setting. Mrs. Staker became involved by going into the classrooms when students expressed confusion about some of Kimo's behaviors, such as his habit of carrying around a glue ball. Mrs. Staker explained that the glue ball was a source of stress relief. She also explained autism to the students as well as, Kimo's "funny eye movements," his seizures and their affect on Kimo. Lynne brought some of Kimo's toys from home and talked about his interests and discussed how his level of learning and understanding differed from theirs.

The integration experience was frightening to Mrs. Staker initially and she waited for the "bad stuff" to happen. It never did. The fall of 1992 was Kimo's second year at his home school where he was included in the fourth grade class. The Stakers again selected the classroom in which they felt Kimo would function best. Both fourth grade classes were excellent and the determination was to include Kimo in each.

The flexibility provided in Kimo's program allows Kimo to move about within the classroom and between classrooms. Such movement fits Kimo's program to his needs at any given moment. While Kimo has an established schedule, his level of concentration and seizures dictate his activities. His curriculum is geared to what he is interested in at the time.

Last year Kimo would appear extremely frustrated at the end of the day when he felt he had not had what he perceived as "his time with Mrs. Young." To decrease his frustration, Kimo's routine was changed to allow him a high level of consistency in beginning and ending his day. When he arrives at school he enters Mrs. Young's room and she greets him specifically, after which she spends a minute or two with him and directs him to his first activity. A similar routine occurs at the end of the day. Throughout the day, Kimo checks into Mrs. Young's room. This setup has provided a level of security for Kimo which Mrs. Young feels has been the key to his success this year.

The unstructured format of Kimo's program prevents wasted time and frustration. The team concluded that forcing Kimo to attend to something he will struggle with or doesn't have the attention span for at the moment, serves no purpose. Now the focus of learning follows Kimo's lead. Kathy, Kimo's aide, uses insight, creativity and her sense of adventure to take advantage of every learning opportunity for Kimo. Her role also includes redirecting Kimo when appropriate. A "time out room" provided for behavior modification (patterned after the Boys Town method) is available, but is now rarely needed. Kimo attends the school assemblies and behaves well. The agreement among the team members is that they will remove Kimo from class or assemblies if his behavior warrants such action.

Mrs. Young thinks that the relationship between the teacher and the student's aide is crucial. She and Kathy, Kimo's aide, work extremely well together. Through coordination and excellent communication, along with Kathy's uncanny instincts, they are better able to facilitate Kimo's progress.

Since Kimo's arrival to the school, collaboration has occurred between the special education and general education teachers. All parties strive to be open and honest in solving problems as they arise. The general educators do not typically modify their curriculum for Kimo. He joins in, with help from Kathy. Group activities provide easy inclusion and Kimo usually participates in learning vocabulary words and in other subjects during the day.

A significant part of home/school communication takes place through a notebook passed between Kimo's parents, his classroom aide, and the supervising teacher. Both Mrs. Staker and Mrs. Young think that good communication is imperative to the success of Kimo's program. All parties focus on Kimo's goals, and keeping each other informed. Problems are identified and addressed as soon as they occur and Kimo's parents feel more involved in Kimo's education then ever before.

Kimo's classmates have had a very positive influence on him. He is happier and more eager to learn, and spends minimal time in the SCI class. Kimo's attendance is better. Mrs. Staker attributes this to his improved mental and physical health, his eagerness to learn and the overall reduction of stress.

Kimo is accepted in the "regular" environment because he is given equal opportunity to do and try what other students normally do. Students taught Kimo to stand in line after recess by modeling body cues, positioning themselves with one in front of him and one behind. Kimo learned quickly from this experience how to act appropriately. Kimo may have to be physically manipulated through an activity, but the does catch on--especially in physical education. His associate's attitude is that he should at least try. Kimo moves into activities at his own pace and has been part of class field trips such as a hayride, pumpkin picking, and a trip to the Pella Tulip Festival.

Kimo has become very independent on the computer. He is able to turn it on, locate the disk he wants, load the program, pull up the menu, and make a

selection. His independence overall has skyrocketed including the area of personal care. His word usage has increased and he has grown physically. Kimo is learning to read and his instruction is geared to maps since he finds them intriguing. Kimo has learned to raise his hand and ask questions, although he is not always sure what he is asking. Mrs. Young feels role modeling of the other students really helps Kimo. His improvements and new behaviors are a result of being among general education students, according to Mrs. Young.

In earlier years, school fire drills presented a significant problem. Kimo had to be removed from the building because the noise bothered him greatly. He now takes such occurrences in stride because he feels safe and secure with his associate and others around him. The high level of frustration once exhibited after seizures no longer occurs. Instead of screaming, crying and throwing things, Kimo now turns to his aide, and says "need help" so that Kathy will direct him back to the task at hand.

Kimo's schedule includes working in the library. Initially he put cards away in books, but his efficiency improved so greatly he has expanded his work to shelving books with assistance. Kimo's IEP advanced from "matching and sorting" goals to more academic goals such as reading and math. The behavior goals once included are no longer needed.

Last year peer helpers were used extensively. Initially two peer helpers were selected each day, one to assist Kimo in the morning and one in the afternoon. Kimo's classmates were so enthusiastic about helping that the schedule was changed to provide two helpers in the morning, two at lunch, and two in the afternoon.

Kimo's new program gives him the opportunity to function in normal surroundings. Everyone has adjusted and adapted to Kimo's involvement through patience and understanding.

School employees who had appeared hesitant in the beginning now have expressed to Mrs. Staker that they have appreciated the chance to get to know Kimo. The school has a film and information library regarding autism to provide information to interested staff and students.

Planning for Kimo's future is already in process. If Kimo has a growth spurt this year he will go to high school next fall. If he maintains his present stature, he will stay one more year at the elementary level. Everyone agrees that Kimo should skip the middle school level, because the middle school approach is too structured to meet Kimo's needs. If he is ready to move on, placement at the high school level would be more age appropriate.

Successful Integration Through Home-School Partnerships
Middle School Level

by
Barbara Crawford, Parent Coordinator, Heartland AEA 11

Nevada Middle School, grades five through eight, first opened in 1991. Among the school's new students was B.J. Smith. B.J.'s situation was unusual because he was finally attending school in his home town, rather than riding the bus to Ames every day. Now if he felt like it he could walk or ride his bike, whichever struck his fancy--a choice many kids take for granted.

Prompted by B.J.'s question, "Why don't I have any friends close by like my sister?" Becky Smith began searching Nevada for a school program for B.J. who has a mild mental disability and performs academically at about the second grade level. Ken Shaw, the superintendent, favored keeping children with special needs in the district so the family felt his support from the outset. When Mrs. Smith contacted Mr. Walker, the middle school principal, he was reluctant at first because he worried that the school could not meet B.J.'s needs. The school could only provide a multi-categorical room and did not offer a SCIN (self-contained with integration room) option which B.J. had attended in Ames. However, after some discussion with Mrs. Smith , Mr. Walker became highly involved in establishing and refining B.J.'s program.

In the meantime, the Smiths enrolled B.J. in a Nevada Boy Scout troop. The troop provided him with new adventures and friendships. It also served as a transitioning step for B.J.'s move into the local school.

After further discussion, the Smiths and the school agreed to a nine-week trial period in Nevada Middle School's multi-categorical special education classroom. Initially B.J. had some behavior problems and often distracted the class. Mrs. Smith was ready to return him to his former program in Ames. Janet Diers, the special education teacher, also voiced her concern that she did not have the materials necessary for B.J. and that he wasn't able to participate in some group activities. The trial period was also tough for B.J. He missed his special education teacher at Ames and some of the friends he had made there. During this trial period, Mrs. Smith made several suggestions about how matters were handled in B.J.'s program in Ames and the school personnel also did some problem solving. Eventually things calmed down.

A meeting was held at the end of the trial period. The Smiths attended apprehensively, unsure of how the educators felt. The reports were mixed, but the consensus was to have B.J. continue. Mrs. Smith inquired about opportunities for integration for B.J. During the trial period, B.J. was included with the general education students during lunch, homeroom, art, music, P.E., school programs and field trips. The Smiths wanted to expand the integration from "specials" to academic classes.

The team agreed it was best to introduce B.J. into the mainstream slowly and that the "getting to know each other" time was imperative because of the new team and new school. Placing B.J. in Mr. Sullivan's health class the second semester was the first step in moving B.J. into more academic situations. Mr. Sullivan's approach has always been "fair" treatment of all students and he found B.J.'s inclusion in his classroom fairly uncomplicated. Janet Diers, the special education teacher, was willing to do whatever she could to support B.J. and Mr. Sullivan. When Mr. Sullivan learned from Ms. Diers and B.J.'s mother that the primary focus for B.J. was socialization, the pressure to have him complete academic objectives was eliminated. Mr. Sullivan has witnessed significant changes in B.J. including increased maturity and mental growth. B.J. is also more responsible and his oral presentations have improved.

Approximately halfway through the year, B.J.'s parents were convinced he could handle the challenge of additional academic classes. By that time the team had become better acquainted with the Smith family and there was a level of trust between them. They discussed math with the educators who felt that B.J. should have adding and subtracting skills before he joined a general education math class. Mr. & Mrs. Smith were hesitant to wait for B.J. to acquire the basic skills because his ability to do so was unknown. They suggested B.J. be included in a general math class and be allowed to use a calculator. When B.J. attended math, students were selected to play Mathopoly with him and told to assist him without doing the work for him. The educators were unsure of B.J.'s ability to tackle word problems. A strategy was developed to help B.J. identify the key words and eliminate the surplus words, enabling him to focus on working the problem. B.J. is rewarded with play money for classroom accomplishments. He uses the money to "buy" things like time to listen to the radio, book covers, or a dinner out with his teacher. B.J.'s science class has made a bigger impact on B.J. than anticipated. He came home from school one day with a list of words for a test on the systems of the body. While no one expected him to learn the list or take the test, he chose to work on the pronunciation and meaning of the medical terms, and displayed a great deal of interest in the area.

Toward the end of his first year at his home school, B.J.'s team discussed whether he should remain at the fifth grade level or move on to the sixth grade in the fall of 1992. Some team members were hesitant to move him on to the sixth grade because the age group is not as friendly and the kids tend to be cliquish. Although a few team members suggested that B.J. remain in the fifth grade, his parents wanted to take the risk and move him on. Mr. and Mrs. Smith also felt B.J. should be included in additional general education classes. Because of B.J.'s limited reading skills, the team was unsure of how the inclusion would work at a higher academic level. Mrs. Smith suggested various approaches such as allowing B.J. to record and do lessons on a tape recorder. Some team members researched and suggested the use of taped books as additional support.

In the past B.J.'s IEP (Individualized Education Plan) goals were very general. The team has worked well together in establishing more specific goals for B.J. They brainstorm and many creative ideas evolve from the joint effort.

Mrs. Smith approached the team about creating a transition plan for B.J. to assist in his move from middle school to high school and from high school to the post-secondary level. The team members, including a Heartland AEA 11 transition specialist also worked on plans for B.J. They produced a list of functional duties B.J. could undertake the next year. The list included: assisting in preparing and serving school lunches; taking lunch tickets; handing out milk; cleaning the chalkboards; assisting the maintenance personnel after school; running the copy machine in the office and so on. B.J.'s love for cooking and interest in the procedures related to food preparation sparked the lunchroom duty list and his reading lessons are taken from cookbooks to keep instruction in his areas of interest. His reading has greatly improved.

During sixth grade, B.J. was a student in Mr. Toot's class. Mr. Toot has had several students with special needs in his past 23 years of teaching and feels his teaching style is conducive to their inclusion. He knew B.J. from school activities and was given B.J.'s IEP by the special education teacher. B.J. was placed in Mr. Toot's class technically for health and science, but the format is very flexible and he is there for a variety of activities. B.J.'s program is not tied to a specific curriculum, which allows for daily adjustments to promote the best learning opportunities. Communication between home and school takes place mainly through an assignment book. Mr. Toot adapted the curriculum on his own. For instance, when the science class had a unit on biomes, B.J. read a book about prairies and prepared an oral presentation, since written work is quite challenging for him. Peer tutoring and group discussions are consistently used and the students involved are changed regularly. Mr. Toot encourages the helpers to avoid "mothering" B.J. and often reminds the group that B.J. is capable of doing the assignment himself. The biggest challenge in the classroom is finding ways to have B.J. fit in during the academic focus. What B.J. does during the class needs to fit in with the classroom flow and be meaningful to him at the same time. The quality of his program is always an issue and ongoing challenge. B.J.'s grade level and the flexibility of the scheduling lend a great deal to the success B.J. is experiencing, according to Mr. Toot. A more departmentalized approach would make B.J.'s inclusion difficult.

Mr. Toot's advice to other teachers is to speak with parents regarding their expectations for the student and to remain flexible. Teachers should focus more on including the student with others than on the content of the lesson. The teacher should also work diligently to establish a healthy rapport with the student. Mr. Toot suggests that parents contact teachers directly to address their concerns.

The Smiths' desire to have B.J. integrated stemmed primarily from their wish to give him the feeling of being a part of the mainstream. The Smiths were convinced that while B.J. could not participate as the other students did, he had much to gain from learning side by side with typical students. They were motivated to promote integration when the new school provided a natural opportunity to make the change. B.J. had always been a star in his special

education setting and his parents now wonder where he might be if he had been integrated at an earlier age.

Integration for B.J. has not been without its difficulties, but he meets people easily and fits in well because of his ability to establish a good rapport with others. B.J.'s mother describes him as "stuck on happy." He is open to change and has no fears. His behavior has improved with medication. Teachers who take a firm approach have also contributed to B.J.'s success. B.J.'s impulse control and social adjustments have also improved because of the example set by the general education students.

Mrs. Smith advises other families interested in integration to be adventuresome and unafraid to try things, "use your gut feelings as a guide since families know their children best." She promotes the "day at a time" approach and being willing to learn and adjust as things proceed. She feels waiting for the perfect opportunity is lost time. Mrs. Smith also emphasizes the power of knowledge. Because she was aware of the full range of options available to children in special education, she was able to lead the way from the segregated Ames setting to the integrated home setting.

Appendix

Compiled by Yvonne Riesen

Some of the resources listed in the following pages may be found in the Area Education Agency libraries of the Parent-Educator Connection Program.

The fact that these resources are listed here is not to be considered an endorsement of any kind. They are simply a list of a few of the resources that are available.

Resources

Manuals. Reports, Papers

Discover The Possibilities: A Curriculum For Teaching Parents About Integration. Schaffner, C.B., Buswell, B.E., Summerfield, A., & Kovar, G. (1988).

Content: A guide to integration written by parents of children with special needs. It defines what integration is; offers strategies to make it happen; provides a model for training parents, educators, and others: and discusses challenges to consider for the future.

Source: PEAK Parent Center, Inc., 6055 Lehman Drive, Suite 101, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Telephone: (719) 531-9400. Cost: $14.50. Transparencies to complement "Discover the Possibilities" are available for $89.00 per set.

The Inclusion Papers: Strategies To Make Inclusion Work. Pearpoint, J., Forest, M., & Snow, J.A. (1992).

Content: A collection of articles, graphics, overheads, and poetry related to "making inclusion happen" in educational and other community settings. The materials are user-friendly and communicate a great deal without excessive length.

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6H 2S5. Telephone/Fax: (416) 658-5363. Cost $10.00 plus $2.00 per copy for mailing.

Just One Of The Kids. In D. Schwartz, J. Mcknight, & M. Kendrick (Eds.), A Story That I Heard (pp 55-58). Forest, M. (1987).

Content: An interview with a general education teacher who has children with challenging needs in her grade 2/3 class. She shares her initial reactions and the changes which have occurred across the school year.

Source: Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, 569 Forum Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Telephone: (717) 787-6057. No cost.

Selected Bibliography Of Books About Disabilities For Children And Young Adults. Compiled by Kelly Jo Patterson-Brown.

Source: Parent-Educator Connection in all Area Education Agencies. No cost.

Implementing Best Practices For All Students In Their Local School: Inclusion Of All Students Through Family And Community Involvement, Collaboration, And The Use Of School Planning Teams And Individual Student Planning Teams. Fox, T. & Williams, W. (1991).

Content: This manual is a revision of five previous manuals developed by project staff. It includes *Best Practice Guidelines for Meeting the Needs of All Students in Local School (1991),* and chapters on parent, student and community involvement, the school planning team process (replacing the Best Practice Review and Improvement Manual; 1987), the individual student planning team process (based on the four volume *Individual Program Design Series)* as well as a final chapter on collaborative teaming. Forms for completing both school and individual student plans are included in the one manual.

Source: Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont, 499C Waterman Bldg. Burlington, VT 05405. Cost $10.00.

Best Practice Guidelines For Meeting The Needs Of All Students In Local Schools. Fox, T. & Williams, W. (1991).

Content: This document presents a set of best practice statements aimed at *all students* who attend the local school. Practices are based upon the *Best Practice Guidelines for Students with Intensive Educational Needs (1987),* effective schools literature and experiences of local schools that have successfully educated all of their children and youth in regular education environments. Best practice areas included are: School Climate and Structure, Collaborative Planning, Social Responsibility, Curriculum Planning, Delivery of Instructional Support Services, Individualized Instruction, Transition Planning, Family-School Collaboration, and Planning for Continued Best Practice Improvement.

Source: Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont, 499C Waterman Bldg. Burlington, VT 05405. Cost $2.00.

The Best Practice Guidelines For Students With Intensive Educational Needs. (1987).

Content: Best practices are general strategies for delivering special education and related services that optimize student participation in integrated community settings. Includes 55 indicators arranged in the following nine areas of best practice: Age-Appropriate Placement in Local Public School, Integrated Delivery of Educational and Related Services, Social Integration, Transition Planning, Community-Based Training, Curricular Expectations, Systematic Data-Based Instruction, Home-School Partnership, and Systemic Review of Educational and Related Services.

Source: Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont, 499C Waterman Bldg. Burlington, VT 05405. Cost $2.00.

The Homecoming Model: Educating Students Who Present Intensive Educational Challenges Within Regular Education Environments.
Thousand, J., Fox, T., Reid, R., Godel, J., Williams, W. and Fox, W. (1986).

Content: This manual is a guide for establishing shared responsibility among teachers, administrators, and parents for the education of students who present intensive educational challenges. It includes an overview of the Homecoming model, essential ingredients to the successful implementation of the model, a description of team planning for transitioning and maintaining students within local schools, a description of the collaborative teaming process and the consultation component and discusses specific issues related to implementing the model.

Source: Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont, 499C Waterman Bldg. Burlington, VT 05405. Cost $4.00.

Achieving Inclusion Through The IEP Process: A Workbook For Parents.
Published by the Maryland Coalition for Integrated Education.

Content: This handbook is also a workbook. Parents work through several "steps" to enable them to develop an appropriate IEP. Strategies for obtaining a more inclusive placement for their child are presented.
The workbook includes chapters on: decision making, developing and writing a vision statement, understanding the law, determining progress to date, critiquing the school's suggestions, creating new goals and objectives, preparing for and attending the IEP meeting and the placement meeting.

Source: Maryland Coalition for Integrated Education, 7257 Parkway Drive, Suite 209, Hanover, MD 21076-1306. Phone (410) 712-4837. Cost $10.00.

ESS Module 1D: Individually Tailored Learning: Strategies For Designing Inclusive Curriculum.

Content: Describes how teams of teachers can collaboratively expand, enrich, adapt, and overlap curriculum for a maximally diverse group of learning, including students with extraordinary abilities and students with disabilities. Includes tools for assessment, annual curriculum planning, and development of teaching plans. Offers a way to meet the requirements of the IEP within the context of general education, whole class planning with "the Individually Tailored Education Report: (ITER). Includes examples of how teachers have actually designed curriculum in elementary, middle and high schools that is tailored to each student's learning abilities, preferences and interests.

Source: Specialized Training Program, Center for Human Development, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. Cost $4.00.

ESS Module 2B: Achieving Balance: Strategies For Teaching Diverse Groups Of Students.

Content: Designed as a companion to Module 1D, Achieving Balance describes strategies for implementing curricular decisions using mixed-ability groups and cooperative learning strategies. The module describes three essential "rules" and a variety of planning hints to assist teachers to (1) organize groups of students, (2) develop teaching plans, and (3) actually teach so that all learners receive learning benefit. Planning tools are provided in both full page and handy card size to facilitate use in teacher planning teams.

Source: Specialized Training Program, Center for Human Development, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. Cost $4.00.

Articles

She Ain't Broke (So Quit Trying To Fix Her). Holroyd, N. (1992).

Content: An open letter to educators from a mother of a child with Down Syndrome. In her letter the mother discusses why a deficit model is not appropriate in her school and community, and the fight to have her daughter accepted as she is.

Source: *Exceptional Parent*, Vol. 22, Issue 6, pp. 70-74.

An Open Letter From The Parent Of A Teenager To Parents Of Younger Children. Fratini, J. (1992).

Content: A letter from a parent of a young woman with disabilities which describes the drawbacks of segregated classrooms which can be solved through inclusive education. The author describes her daughter's experience in segregated settings and offers examples of how inclusive educational experiences could have been more beneficial. Throughout the letter, she challenges parents of younger children to pursue inclusive educational opportunities for their children.

Source: *Exceptional Parent,* Vol. 22, Issue 1, pp. 32-34.

Encouraging Peer Supports And Friendships. Stainback, W., Stainback, S. & Wilkinson, A (1992).

Content: A discussion of friendships and supportive relationships between students with and without disabilities. Strategies for building peer support are described and steps to take when peer support is not working are presented.

Source: *Teaching Exceptional Children,* Vol. 24, Issue 2, pp. 6-11.

The McGill Action Planning System (MAPS): A Strategy For Building The Vision. Vandercook, T., York, J., & Forest, M. (1989).

Content: A description of the MAPS process, which places primary emphasis on the integral involvement of learners with disabilities in the school community. The seven key questions that comprise the MAPS process provide a structure that assists teams of adults and children to creatively dream, scheme, plan and produce results which will further the inclusion of individual children with labels into the activities, routines, and environments of their same age peers in their school community. An essential feature of the MAPS process is peer involvement.

Source: *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps,* Vol. 14, Issue 3, pp. 205-215.

Parent/Professional Partnerships In Advocacy: Developing Integrated Options Within Restrictive Systems. Hamre-Nietupski, S., Krajewski, L., Nietupski, J., Ostercamp D., Sensor, K., & Opheim, B. (1988).

Content: A discussion of advocacy partnerships between parents and professionals working for integrated educational options for students with severe disabilities. Includes strategies for obtaining integrated options, results of advocacy efforts and critical features of advocacy partnerships.

Source: *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps,* Vol. 13, Issue 4, pp. 251-259.

Books

Circle of Friends: People With Disabilities and Their Friends Enrich the Lives of One Another. Perske, R. (1998); Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Content: A collection of true stories and issues to consider regarding "Circles of Friends" friendships between people with disabilities and people without disabilities. The narrative is complemented by beautiful illustrations done by Martha Perske depicting the people in the stories.

Source: Cokesbury Books, 201 8th Avenue South, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202. Telephone: (800) 672-1789. Cost $9.95.

Controversial Issues Confronting Special Education. Stainback, W. & Stainback, S. (Eds.) (1992).

Content: A discussion of a variety of critical issues which are currently facing education in general and specifically special education. Diverse perspecitives on topics such as full inclusion, schools as inclusive communities, labeling, assessment, instructional strategies, classroom management, and collaboration/consultation and higher education are presented.

Source: Allyn and Bacon, Allyn & Bacon Order Processing Department, P.O. Box 11073, Des Moines, IA 50381-1073. Cost $46.00.

Interactions: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals. Friend, M., & Cook, L. (1992); White Plains, NY: Longman Publishing Group.

Content: Presents information on the development and use of skills needed for effective professional collaboration, including team meetings, ongoing communication and problem solving with parents and colleagues, and co-teaching. Activities and related readings are included in each chapter.

Source: Longman Inc., c/o Addison Wesley, Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867. Telephone: (800) 447-2226. Cost $28.00.

Achieving the Complete School: Strategies for Effective Mainstreaming. Biklen, D. (1985); New York: Teachers College Press.

Content: A "how-to" guide on school integration includes strategies that have been tried and proven effective. Each chapter addresses the role of different individuals, such as special education administrators, school building principals, teachers, and parents.

Source: Teachers College Press, P.O. Box 2032 Colchester, VT 05449. Telephone: (800) 445-6638. Cost $15.95.

Building Integration with the IEP. Buswell, B., & Veneris, J (1989);

Content: The information in this booklet is to assist parents with taking an active role in bulding integration into their child's IEP. This is a helpful booklet for parents and educators.

Source: PEAK Parent Center, Inc.
6055 Lehman Drive, Suite 101
Colorado Springs, CO 80918
Telephone: (719) 531-9400

The Inclusion Papers: Strategies to Make Inclusion Happen. Pearpoint, J., Forest, M.

Content: Practical, down-to-earth, sensible. Includes Circles of Friends, MAPS, articles about drop-outs, kids at risk, Medical School course and more...graphics, poetry, overheads...

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $10.

Reflections on Inclusive Education. Mckan C.R., P.

Content: Stories and short reflections for each week of the year. Perfect to read aloud to your family, school assemblies, classrooms, church groups. Simple but profound words from "Father Pat".

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $10.

Don't Pass Me By: Writing from the Street. Bunch, G.

Content: Writings from students at Beat the Street, a unique alternative education program for "street kids"--kids labelled "bad, sad, mad and can't add." Includes a description of Beat the Street's philosophy of education for students at risk.

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $10.

You Only Learn What You Already Know: Literacy and Inclusion. McKnight, J., Snow, J., Odell, T., Pearpoint, J., Forest, M.

Content: A concise, 28-page booklet describing the community way vs the systems approach to learning. Section on characteristics of successful community organizers, literacy workers, teachers.

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $5.

Action for Inclusion. Forest, M., O'Brien, J., Pearpoint, J., Snow, J.

Content: A down-to-earth blueprint of what 21st century education ought to be doing for all kids in regular classrooms. Modest but powerful strategies for making it happen in a jargon-free, step-by-step book." Herb Lovett, Boston.

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $10.

From Behind the Piano: The Building of Judith Snow's Unique Circle of Friends. Pearpoint, J., O'Brien, J.

Content: "Everyone's life is a story lived. Jack's story of Judith's life is amazing; her life is so filled with vitality, courage, defeat and victory that the reader learns that a life story of some people fascinates more than any fiction." John McKnight, Chicago.

Source: Inclusion Press, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ontario Canada. M6H 2S5. Cost $10.

Videos

A Chance to Belong: A Story of School Integration. Porter, G. (Producer). (1989).

Content: In this video the process of developing inclusionary models of education in Woodstock, N.B. is discussed. Parents, teachers and administrators share their insights. Students integrated at elementary and community college levels are shown. [20 minutes]

Source: Toronto Canadian Association for Community Living.

With A Little Help From My Friends. Forest, J., & Flynn, G. (Producers).

Content: This is a three part videotape. Part I, "The Vision," discusses schools where all children belong including development of friendship circles for peer support and a historical persepective of segregation and institutionalization. In part II, Let's Talk," several teachers and students discuss the impact of integration in their schools. Part III, "May's MAP," outlines a planning process to develop inclusive curricular practices. [60 minutes].

Source: Toronto: Center for Integrated Education and Community.

Miller's MAP. Expectations Unlimited & Inclusion Press (Producers).

Content: A 40-minute video on making inclusion happen, involving children, parents, neighbors and professionals in a creative team. " A moving and practical teaching tool." Ray Murray, Dir. Special Education, Auckland College of Education, New Zealand.

Source: Expectations Unlimited & Inclusion Press. Cost $50.00.

Kids Belong Together. People First (Producers).

Content: A 24-minute video featuring Patrick Macklan, celebrating friendship, illustrating the MAPS process in action. The closing song is destined to become the anthem of inclusion.

Source: People First, Lethbridge, Alberta. Cost $50.00.

Together We're Better Kit. Forest, M., Pearpoint, J., Snow, J.

Content: 3 video tapes (2.5 hours) of the team presenting Inclusion, Strategies, MAPS and PATH-shot during a Chicago seminar. The Inclusion Papers (book), a poster and newsletter round out the kit.

Source: *Comforty Mediaconcepts,* 613 Michigan Ave., Evanston, IL 60202. Telephone/Fax: (708) 475-0791. Cost $125.00 plus $10.00 shipping.

Catalogs

Inclusive Education for Learners with Severe Disabilities. Compiled by Terri Vandercook, Sue Wolff, David Fowler, and Mary Beth Doyle.

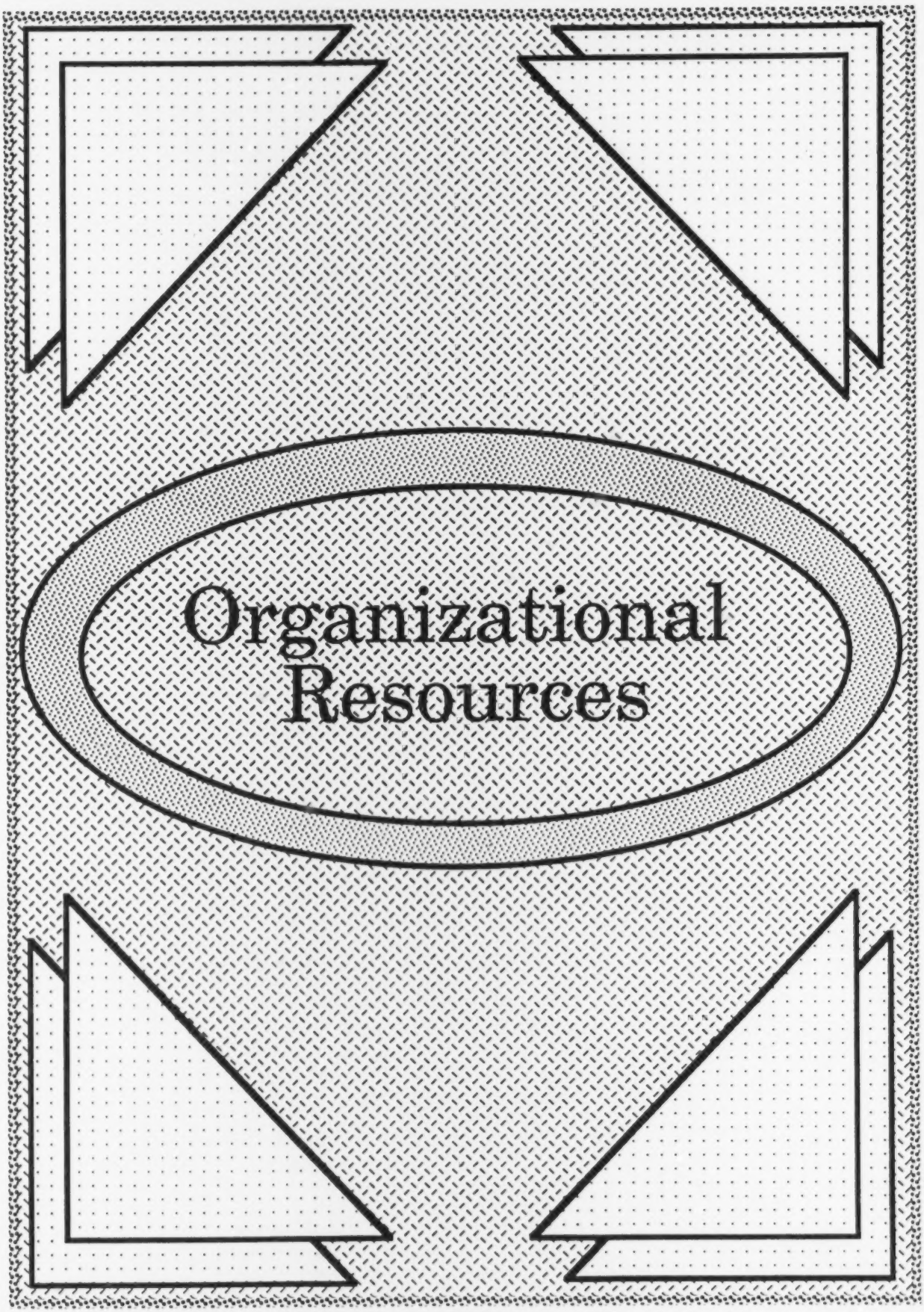
Source: Institute on Community Integration, College of Education, University of Minnesota. Cost $5.00.

Resources Used To Compile This Bibliography

Inclusion Education for Learners With Severe Disabilities, 1992-93 edition. Institute on Community Integration (UAP) College of Education, University of Minnesota

Creating Inclusive Educational Communities, 1991 edition. Number 1, Creating Inclusive Schools. A Resource Guide. Maine Department of Education

Iowa News, February 1993. Iowa Bureau of Special Education, Iowa Department of Education


Organizational
Resources

Peak Parent Center, Inc.
6055 Lehman
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

PACER Center, Inc.
4826 Chicago Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55417-1098

Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota
6 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Dr. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Research and Training Center on Community Integration
Center on Human Policy
Syracuse University
200 Huntington Hall, 2nd floor
Syracuse, NY 13244-2340

Center for Integrated Education
35 Jackes Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada, M4TIE2

Federation for Children with Special Needs
312 Stuart St., 2nd floor
Boston, MA 02116

Center for Developmental Disabilities
499C Waterman Building
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT 05405

The Inclusive Education Project
Syracuse University
Division of Special Education and Rehabilitation
805 S. Crouse Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13244-2280

Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education
Attention: Steve Maurer
Grime State Office Bldg.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

Iowa Pilot Parents
Box 1151
Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Schools Are For Everyone (SAFE)
P.O. BOX 9503
Schenectady, NY 12309

Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC)
National Headquarters
2501 Avenue J
Arlington, TX 76006

Learning Disability Association (LDA)
4156 Library Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

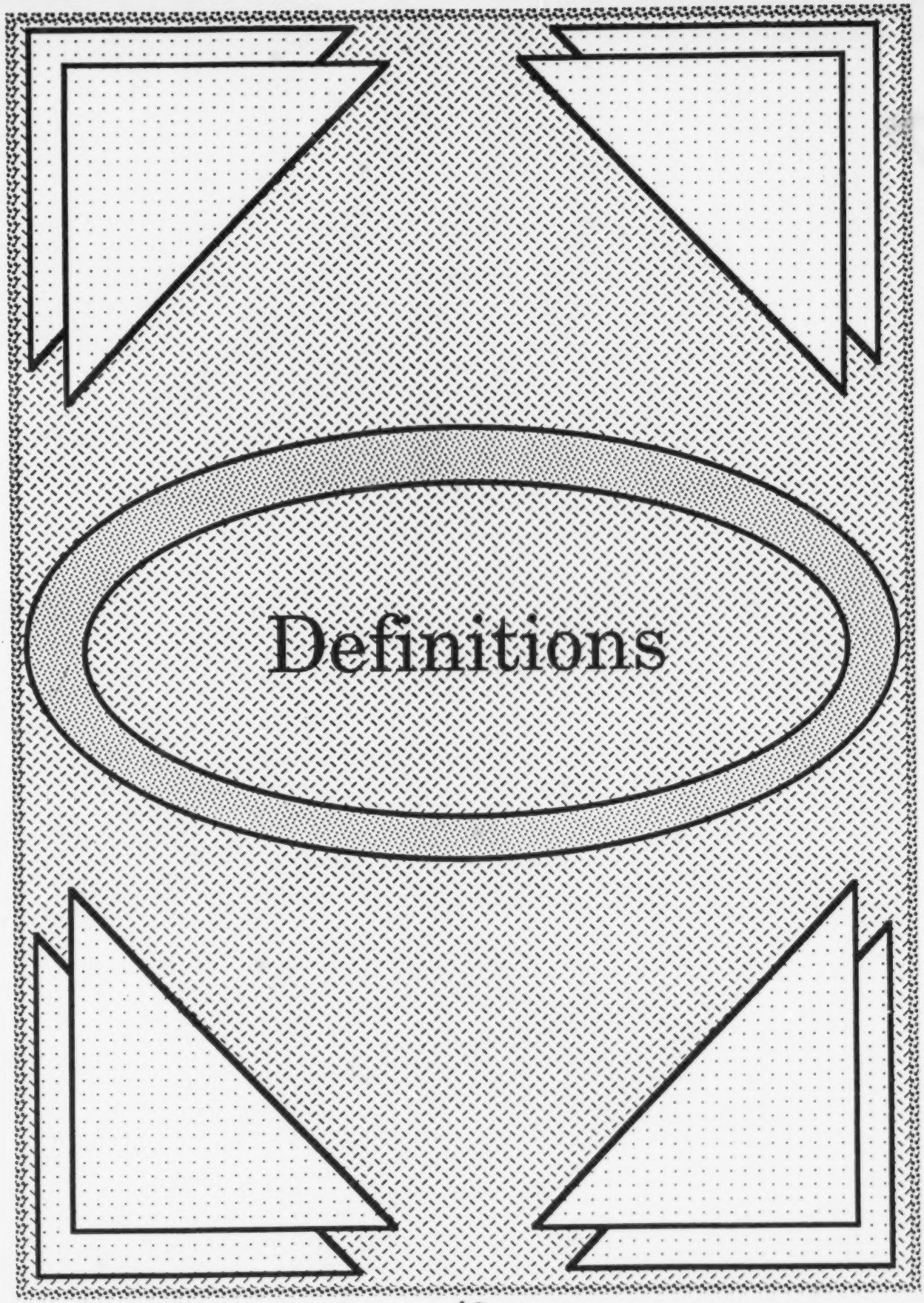
The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH)
11201 Greenwood Ave. N
Seattle, WA 98133

National Down Syndrome Society
141 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10010

United Cerebral Palsy Assoc., Inc.
7 Penn Plaza, Suite 804
New York, NY 10001

***National Education Association (NEA)**
1201 16th St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20036-3290

*NEA has created the Special Education Advisory Committee to address the issue of "full inclusion."


Definitions

Full Inclusion

All students with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities and needs for related services, receive their total education within the regular classroom setting in the neighborhood school they would attend if not disabled.

-Steve Maurer, State Consultant for Severe & Profound Education Programs

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Students are placed with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible.
Placement into special classes, schools, or residential programs may be made only when the nature and severity of the disability precludes integration into a regular class or school setting.

-Steve Maurer, State Consultant for Severe & Profound Education Programs

Mainstreaming

Placing children with disabilities into the regular education academic curriculum for all or part of their educational experience.

-Steve Maurer, State Consultant for
Severe & Profound Education Programs

Integration

Placing special education programs in age-appropriate regular school settings with selected opportunities for children to interact during the school day.

-Steve Maurer, State Consultant for
Severe & Profound Education Programs

Legal Aspects of Integration

Least Restrictive Environment
An English Translation of Key Legal Requirements

The Law*	English Translation*
To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, [must be] educated with children who are nondisabled. 34 C.F.R. Section 300.550(b)(1)	Children with disabilities have a legal right to the greatest amount of integration which is appropriate to their unique needs. Although federal law does not require the best education, it does require the most integrated education.
Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment [may occur] only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. Section 300.550(b)(2)	If it is possible to plan a program of special services, supports, and adaptations so that a child with disabilities can make progress which is satisfactory in light of that child's unique needs and abilities, then it is ILLEGAL to segregate that child from nondisabled peers. Note that the law requires maximum integration, but only satisfactory progress. Thus, Congress and the United States Department of Education have placed a very heavy emphasis on each child's civil right to be protected from unnecessary segregation. In other words, if we can make integration work for a child, segregation is illegal.
Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child [must be] educated in the school that he or she should attend if nondisabled. 34 C.F.R. Section 300.552	If a child's IEP could, with appropriate supports and services be implemented satisfactorily at the child's "neighborhood school," the child has a legal right to attend that school.

*All sections are from Volume 34 Code of Federal Regulations
Printed with permission.

*Ringer, L. (1988). Legal Advocacy for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Minneapolis, MN.

United States Department of Education
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Mrs. Marilyn R. Wessels, President
Schools are For Everyone, Inc.
Gatehouse
1365 Van Antwerp Apts.
Schenectady, New York 12309

Dear Mrs. Wessels:

I am writing in response to your recent letter. You provided a summary of the discussion at the TASH conference and express confusion with my statement to Dr. Anne Gentry, "...The quotes that you cited in your letter need to be put into the full context of other questions and answers provided in the discussion period of the session in which I participated." As you may recall, I further talked about the need for individual decisions to be made for each child and that an article for the TASH newsletter re-stating our Department policy on least restrictive environment would not say that all children with disabilities should be placed in regular classrooms. Rather, our position remains that it is an important legal right of children with disabilities to be educated with students without disabilities to the greatest extent possible. Such decisions are made within the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process on an individual child basis. A child with a disability must be placed in the regular classroom if so indicated in that child's IEP. Full inclusion within the regular classroom should indeed be an option, but the Federal law also requires that a continuum of options be made available, to meet the needs of children with disabilities as determined appropriate within the IEP process.

Sincerely,
Judy A. Schrag, Ed.D.
Director
Office of Special Education Programs

OSERS: Full Inclusion Not Mandated

The goal of integrating children with disabilities in schools alongside peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate is supported in the IDEA (Public Law 101-476), according to a Dec. 24, 1991, policy letter from the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). However, IDEA does not specifically mention "full inclusion" and requires placement decisions to be made on a case-by-case basis. Local education agencies must maintain a continuum of alternative placements, including both regular and special education settings, in order to properly address the individual needs of all children with disabilities.

The Pacesetter, June 1992
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Conclusions Regarding LRE

1. The placement decision must be made at the IEP.

2. The student's full range of needs must be examined, including socialization.

3. A full continuum of placement options must be available.

4. A comprehensive system of personnel development must exist so schools can acquire and disseminate promising education practices that can make integration work.

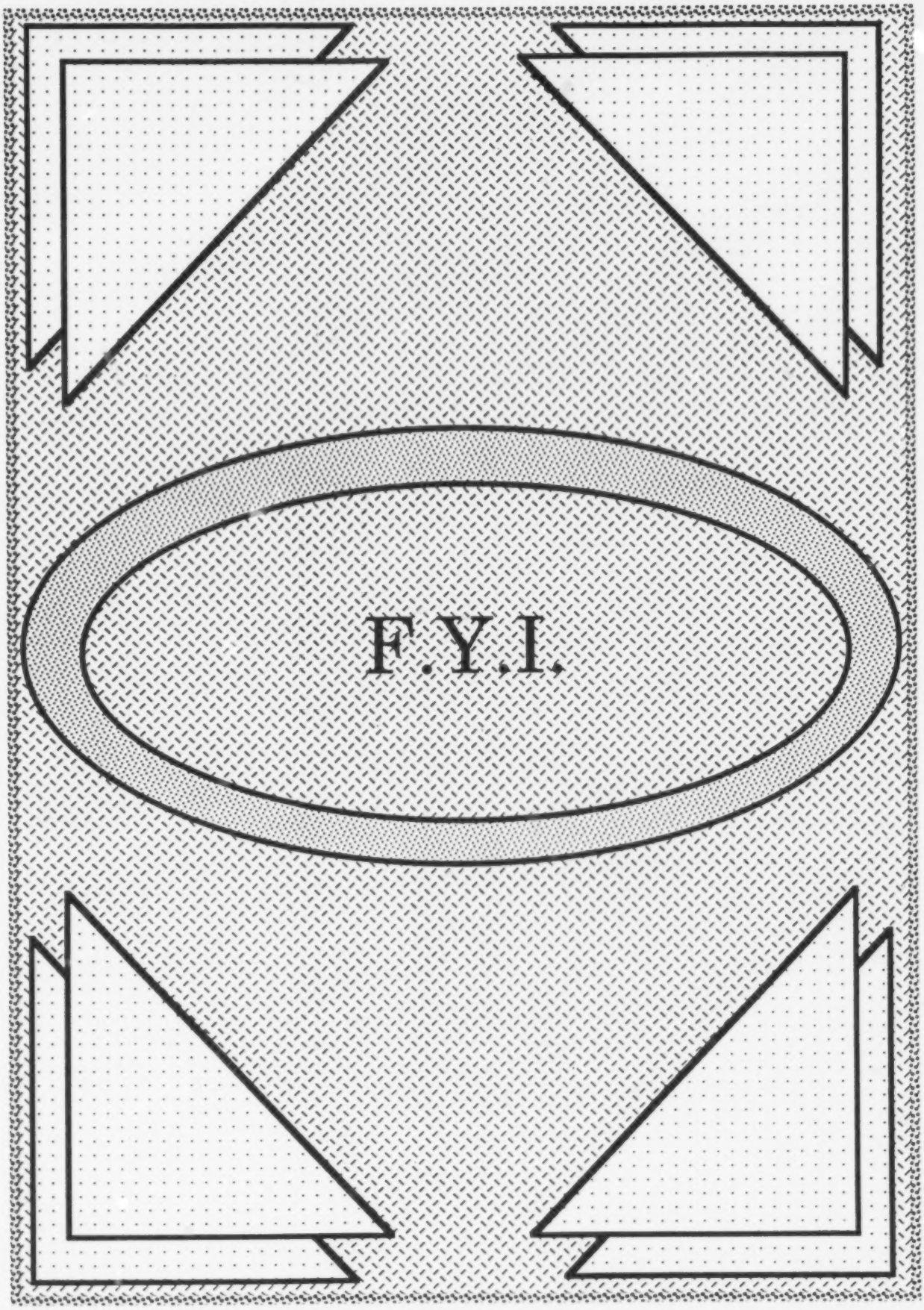
5. Before a student can be removed from the regular education environment, there must be a demonstration that it would not work even with supplemental aids and services.

6. The justifications for restrictions must be compelling educational justifications, not administrative conveniences.

7. If a preferable segregated program is proposed, the question must be asked whether those features that make it preferable can be offered on a regular campus.

8. Even if some restrictions are justified, we still need to look to non-curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities for integration.

Reed Martin, J.D. *Video Tape 6: Least Restrictive Environment, Resource Guide to Accompany Videotape Lecture Series,* The Carle Foundation, Center for Health Law & Ethics, 110 W. Main, Urbana, IL 61801.


F.Y.I.

From a Position Paper on Integration
from the
Iowa Association of Area Education Agencies
Directors of Special Education
May 1991

"...affirm that all children with disabilities are entitled to equal access to a full continuum of program and services. The primary responsibility of these AEA Directors of Special Education, as set forth by the Code of Iowa, is to assure that appropriate educational programs and services are provided to all children with a disability as defined by the Iowa Rules of Special Education..."

"...support individual children being served in a regular classroom setting 100% of the time with appropriate supports as one of the options within the full continuum of services. The Association does **not** support full integration as a policy/practice in which all students with disabilities and needs for related services, receive their total education within the regular classroom setting in the school they would attend if not disabled."

For a full text of this paper contact the Iowa Association of Directors of Special Education, Tom Burgett, president, 1994.

Inclusion Strategies for Teachers

Create ways to enable a student with severe disabilities to participate in structured learning sessions with nondisabled students.

Through your interactions, demonstrate the respect you have for the student. Students will follow your lead.

Use age-appropriate language, intonation patterns. Try to use the method of communication that is most likely to be understood by the student.

If you are not comfortable with certain actions, or characteristics of a particular student with disabilities (e.g. drooling, loud vocalizing), work at overcoming this uneasiness. If you are not able to overcome your uneasiness, **try not to assume that your students share the same feeling**. That is, avoid underestimating the sensitivity of your students.

Show an interest in the curriculum offered to a student with severe disabilities and provide indications that you value his/her learning accomplishments.

Talk openly, and in a nonpunitive manner, with students who are or appear to be ridiculing or acting in a demeaning manner toward a person with severe disabilities.

Comment positively on the social interactions between disabled and nondisabled students.

Avoid references to, and language about, students with disabilities that sets them apart from the rest of the student body.

Make a conscious effort to include students with disabilities and their parents in the routines and practices that involve the entire student body (e.g. locker assignments, assembly attendance, representation in yearbooks, invitations to PTA meetings, etc.)

Use existing curricula to sensitize students to society's treatment of persons with disabilities.

Take advantage of the special education teacher's planning time to ask questions and discuss ideas and concerns.

Form a peer-companion group to establish a larger network of peers who share an interest in spending time with a particular student with disabilities.

Printed with permission. (From suggestions made by teachers.)
The New Hampshire Challenge. April, 1990. Founded by New Hampshire Special Families United, Vol. 2, issue 3. For more information, contact Jan Nesbit, the Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire, Morrell Hall, Durham, NH 03824. Telephone (603) 862-4320

Criteria for Integration
What Makes Integration Work?

Just ask anyone who has integrated students with severe disabilities into regular schools, "What made it work?" Responses such as "The principal made all the difference" or "Without the support of the principal we would have never succeeded" are common. The building principal is clearly one of the keys to successful integration. What strategies do these principals who have experienced success use to make it happen? The results of semi-structured interviews conducted by California Research Institute staff with fifteen building principals in schools throughout the country (California, Colorado, Iowa, New York, South Dakota, and Vermont) have revealed several common themes. The following markers emerged as critical aspects of successful programs.

1. The Existence of a Clear Philosophy.

   The importance of a clearly articulated philosophy cannot be overstated. Those principals interviewed indicated that these premises guide the educational programming provided in the school It is this set of beliefs which provide the rationale for integration. The many and varied decisions. activities, and challenges occurring in the school are guided by this clear set of values about the education and inclusion of all children within the school. Ultimately, the challenge is to translate those philosophical principles into practice. It is this set of beliefs which provide a benchmark against which alternative choices can be examined.

   In addition, those principals interviewed stressed the importance of discussing and examining beliefs held by school staff. It is crucial to articulate beliefs and to then act based upon these beliefs. With a strong mission the stage is set for integration!

2. The Presence of Proactive, Visible, and Committed Leadership

   The instructional leader of the school is a well-established role for the building principal. When schools are successfully integrated the princial assumes leadership characterized by:

   (a) high visibility;
   (b) a proactive style;
   (c) unwavering commitment;
   (d) clear expectations;
   (e) communication skills;
   (f) expert facilitation;
   (g) excellent problem-solving skills.

3. A Stable School Environment

   Those interviewed indicated that a prerequisite to successful integration is a stable school climate.

4. Strong Administrative Support.

   While the leadership and support of the building principal is clearly a prerequisite to successful integration, it is also crucial that the district administration support integration. The administration must clearly communicate that integration will not jeopardize other programs.

5. Parent Involvement

   The recognition and appreciation of parental involvement was clearly a factor in successful programs. Principals interviewed encouraged and planned for ample opportunity for parental involvement. The formats were varied but the underlying theme was clearly to communicate the philosophy of the building/district. In addition, it should be made clear that these beliefs guide programming within the school.

6. Preparation and Planning

   Those interviewed suggested several issues to examine when preparing for integration. They are as follows:

   a. Examine and assess the context. What is the nature of the school/community? Where are we now and what do we want to achieve based upon our beliefs? The principal must clearly understand the nature and belief system of the school and community. Therefore, those interviewed indicated that a first-year principal should be cautioned before embarking on integration.

   b. Staff training. The staff must be well-informed and possess the knowledge to follow through with integration. This should take the form of both formal and informal activities.

   c. Incentives. It is the principal that must identify incentives for staff when embarking on any new venture. Those interviewed acknowledged the reluctance of some to try integration. They indicated that forcing staff to participate will not work. Therefore, it is important to identify incentives for those who require some external encouragement.

   d. Networking. Those interviewed indicated that the best way to prepare for integration was to meet with others who have already made integration work within their building. Making site visits to see integration working was a suggested strategy.

   e. Consultants and planned technical assistance. Those interviewed indicated that a very important part of their role was to facilitate and secure needed expertise.

   f. Planning. Those interviewed suggested that developing action plans with realistic timelines was crucial.

7. Teaming/Collaboration

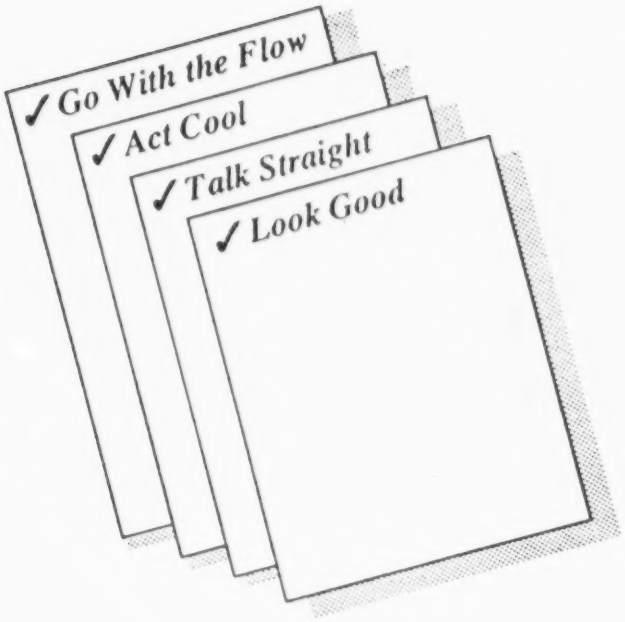
Those interviewed clearly indicated that integration does not succeed in a vacuum. Teaching staff must share knowledge and discard the notion that students with disabilities are the exclusive responsibility of special educators. Therefore, the use of teams of regular and special educators collaborating to insure the successful integration of students is viewed as critical. A strong and knowledgeable special education teacher is clearly an important ingredient. It is the synergy of all the teachers that makes integration work.

Finally, those interviewed indicated that many positive changes took place within their buildings as a result of integration. School climate was enhanced, staff were invigorated, students displayed an increased sense of self-confidence and self-esteem and the school as a *community* showed a greater sensitivity to society at large.

Printed with permission. [Credit for this article goes to Strategies... a part of the TASH Dissemination Project , Fall 1989. For further information contact Elizabeth Waiters, California Research Institute, San Francisco State University, 612 Front St., San Francisco, CA 94132. Telephone: 415-338-7847.]

Integration Checklist

A Guide to Full Inclusion of Students with Disabilities



Photocopied with permission.

Integration Checklist

A Guide to Full Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

Increasing numbers of students with disabilities are being integrated into regular education classes. Mere presence in a regular classroom is not enough, however. To be truly integrated, students with disabilities must experience *inclusion.* They must be included in the activities, routines and social life of the regular classroom and of the school.

When initiating inclusion in regular classes, many special and regular educators ask:

- ✓ *What does it mean for students with severe disabilities to be included?*
- ✓ *What should it look like?*
- ✓ *How can we facilitate inclusion?*
- ✓ *How can classmates be involved?*

This *Integration Checklist* is a tool for uncovering the answers to those questions. It was developed to help educational team members identify potential indicators of inclusion in their schools. It can also help teams facilitate the membership, participation and learning of students with disabilities in regular education classes and other integrated school settings.

The checklist is divided into four sections, each related to a different aspect of inclusion. Education team members can work through the checklist for each individual student in each specific class. Space is provided below each item for the recording of additional brief comments. After the team completes the checklist, items and comments can be reviewed to determine the priorities to address. Team members should not view the checklist as an absolute measure of inclusion; every indicator may not be appropriate for each student and each class. Instead, the checklist should be used to guide team planning and discussion.

This publication was funded, in part, by the Minnesota Integrated Education Technical Assistance Project, a cooperative project of the Institute on Community Integration (UAP) at the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Department of Education. **No portion of this publication may be reproduced without permission from the Institute.** To obtain additional brochures or reproduction permission contact the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Drive SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Phone: (612)624-4512. The Integration Checklist was revised from: Vandercook, T. and York, J. (1989). A team approach to program development and support. In S. Stainback and W. Stainback (Eds.), Support systems for educating all students in the mainstream. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.

✓ *GO WITH THE FLOW*

___ Does the student enter the classroom at the same time as classmates?

___ Is the student positioned so that she or he can see and participate in what is going on?

___ Is the student positioned so that classmates and teachers may easily interact with her or him (e.g., without a teacher between the student and classmates, not isolated from classmates)?

___ Does the student engage in classroom activities at the same time as classmates?

___ Does the student make transitions in the classroom at the same time as classmates?

___ Is the student involved in the same activities as classmates?

___ Does the student exit the classroom at the same time as classmates?

✓ *ACT COOL*

___ Is the student actively involved in class activities (e.g., asks/answers questions, plays a role in group activities)?

___ Is the student encouraged to follow the same classroom and social rules as classmates (e.g., hugs only when appropriate, stays in seat during instruction)?

___ Is the student given assistance only as necessary, and is assistance faded as soon as possible?

___ Are classmates, and not just teachers, encouraged to provide assistance to the student (e.g., transitions to other classrooms, within the classroom)?

___ Are classmates encouraged to ask for assistance from the student?

___ Is assistance provided for the student by the classroom teacher?

___ Does the student use the same or similar types of materials during classroom activities as classmates (e.g., Tom Cruise notebooks, school mascot folders)?

✓ *TALK STRAIGHT*

___ Does the student have a way to communicate with classmates?

___ Do classmates know how to communicate with the student?

___ Does the student greet others in a manner similar to that of classmates?

___ Does the student socialize with classmates?

___ Is this socialization facilitated?

___ Do teachers and support staff give the same type of feedback (e.g., praise, discipline, attention) to the student as to classmates?

___ If the student uses an alternative communication system, do classmates know how to use it?

___ Do teachers know how to use the alternative communication system?

___ Is the alternative communication system always available to the student?

✓ *LOOK GOOD*

___ Is the student given the opportunity to attend to her or his appearance as classmates do (e.g., use locker mirror between classes)?

___ Does the student have accessories that are similar to those of classmates (e.g., oversize tote bags, friendship bracelets, hair jewelry)?

___ Is the student's dress age appropriate?

___ Is clothing for activities age appropriate (e.g., napkins not bibs, "cool" paint shirts)?

___ Are personal belongings carried discreetly?

___ Is the student's equipment kept clean?

___ Is the student's hair combed?

___ Are the student's hands clean and dry?

___ Is the student's clothing changed as necessary to maintain a neat appearance?

___ Does the student use chewing gum, breath mints, breath spray?

✓ *OTHER SUGGESTIONS . . .*

Listed below are some additional suggestions for strengthening team members' abilities to support inclusion in the classroom:

✓ Know *why* the student with disabilities is in the regular classroom and be able to communicate this to students and fellow professionals.

✓ Keep in mind that the purpose of support personnel in regular classrooms is to facilitate inclusion. Because their presence can inhibit inclusion in the class activities and social life, they should fade away as much as possible.

✓ Empower the student to be an active participant in all classroom and school activities.

✓ Do things *with* instead of *for* the student when she or he needs assistance.

✓ Include the student in conversations. Never talk about the student in front of her or him.

✓ Consider the age-appropriate expectations of classmates. Treat the student as you would her or his classmates.

✓ Develop ways for classmates and teachers to include the student. Be a model.

✓ Know, follow, and enforce classroom rules.

✓ Be part of the class. Work with all students.

✓ Watch classmate and teacher reactions to a potentially disruptive student. Respond accordingly and problem-solve on the spot.

✓ Point out successes and positive changes for all to celebrate.

Inclusive School Communities

..for students with disabilities.

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Inclusion of students with disabilities means their involvement in all aspects of school life alongside peers who do not have disabilities. This includes placement in general education classes and participation in extracurricular activities. In an inclusive system, special education and related support services are provided in typical school settings. For most school districts and educators this is a new way of supporting students with disabilities.

In the past, some people with disabilities were considered too "handicapped" to be members of regular schools and classes. In recent years, this belief has changed dramatically. Students with even the most severe disabilities are learning and growing with classmates who do not have disabilities. More and more families and educators are now working together to build inclusive school communities where each student belongs. Here are *Ten Reasons Why...*

1. Preparation for Adult Living.

The goal of education is to prepare individuals to be contributing members of society. Segregated and homogenous settings cannot prepare students for integrated, heterogenous community life. Students with disabilities and those without must grow up and learn together in school if they are to become interdependent community members. Inclusive schools provide the opportunity for all students to develop the attitudes, values, and skills required to get along with one another. By attending their local schools, students with disabilities are included in the communities where they live, can make friends with neighborhood kids, and can practice skills in the actual community settings where they're needed. This sense of belonging is essential for self esteem and achievement.

2. Improved Learning.

Many types of learning occur best in inclusive schools. Students with disabilities who are placed in general education classes have an environment in which to grow socially and academically. Peers are often the best models and teachers of many socially valued behaviors. In integrated settings students with disabilities have opportunities to learn many things from students without disabilities, including problem solving, mobility, vocational, social, and communication skills. Like all children, those with disabilities need to encounter a variety of experiences. In integrated settings they're exposed to a wide range of activities, people, environments, and ideas.

3. Growth for Peers.

By having students with disabilities in their schools and classes, peers without disabilities have the opportunity to learn the attitudes and skills needed for positive interactions with individuals who have diverse gifts, talents and challenges. This experience often leads to growth in self-esteem and interpersonal behaviors, paving the way for the formation of rewarding adult relationships with a variety of people in community, home, and workplace settings.

4. Effective Use of Resources.

In inclusive schools personnel can be more effectively utilized. When students with disabilities are educated in general education classes, special educators and related service personnel provide support in those settings. This affords all students the opportunity to learn from special educators, classroom teachers, and classmates. The entire class benefits from the collaboration of general and special educators; some general educators feel they have learned from special educators more effective

ways to assist all students in the class. In this way, special educators and general educators support each other in meeting the educational needs of all children. In addition, districts have reported that it is no more expensive to provide an education for children with disabilities in regular schools and classes than it is to educate those same students in segregated settings.

5. Friendship Development.

Integration affords students with and without disabilities opportunities to become friends. Peer relationships between students with disabilities and classmates without are important now and in the future, and are essential to a successful and fulfilling life in the community. Some of the friends that students with disabilities make in school today will be their co-workers and fellow community members as they reach adulthood.

6. Acceptance of Differences.

People in our society have many misconceptions about persons with disabilities. The best way to overcome these is by bringing people together in shared activities. As students with and without disabilities interact as classmates and friends, their parents and teachers have the opportunity to witness successful integration in action. This new experience provides hope for a truly cooperative community and a society that accepts and values the inclusion of all persons in all aspects of community life.

7. Team Building.

Successful inclusion of students with disabilities requires greater collaboration between general and special education personnel. This teamwork not only results in improved instruction for students, but it also brings about increased "esprit de corps" and support among team members. As diversity in schools continues to increase, all adults and students will need to work together to build inclusive school communities where all children are welcomed, valued, and enabled to succeed.

8. Individualized Education.

Well-designed and implemented inclusive programs allow the needs of all students to be met. A good individualized program for a student with disabilities seeks to mesh with that of the student's peers while still meeting her/his individual educational needs. The specific goals and objectives for individual students may vary greatly, but students can accomplish their individual objectives in typical settings. Frequently, a truly individualized approach to educational programming is realized to a greater degree in general education classes and other school activities.

9. Parental Involvement.

When children with disabilities are included in their local schools, parents can participate to a greater extent in that school and in the community where the school is located. Parents of included students can be a part of a support network of parents of other local children with disabilities, as well as parents of children without disabilities. Such support is more difficult to access when a child's school is a long distance from his or her home community.

10. Support of Civil Rights.

Like all students, those with disabilities have the right to attend regular schools and general education classes, and to receive an appropriate education within those regular classes. Public Law 94-142 entitles all children with disabilities to a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Integration is a civil rights issue. In a

democratic society every person is to be afforded equal opportunities; segregated settings symbolize society's rejection of a segment of the population. Through participation in integrated schools and communities, students with and without disabilities can experience the richness of a society that values and includes all its citizens.

For more information on building inclusive school communities, contact:

- Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, (612) 624-4848.
- ARC - Minnesota, (612) 827-5641, or your local ARC chapter.
- Minnesota Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, P.O. Box 1837, Pioneer Station, St. Paul, MN 55101.
- PACER Center, Inc., (612) 827-2966.

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The cost of inclusion

by Pat Jones, parent

For the past several years, I have argued on many occasions that, if inclusion of children with disabilities into regular education settings were done with careful planning and creativity, it would be no more costly than segregated and separate special education models. I have always tried to admit when I am mistaken. There has been a dramatic change in my perspective this year and I have come to know, first hand, that inclusion is very expensive, indeed.

Since our son has been included in his neighborhood high school, we have had to buy tickets to football games, tickets to basketball games, school yearbooks, tickets to the school dances and battle of the bands. We have had requests from him for the "in" clothing and the "in" haircut and twice as many wallet photos of his school pictures to trade with friends. We have had to financially assist with dinner dates, corsages and homecoming dance tickets, an event that created a need for a new sport coat, khakis, shirt, tie, boxers (!) and socks. And now, before we've even paid for that, comes the news he will need a lettermen's jacket for his football manager's letter. And we're not even through the first quarter! For those of you who know how challenging our son's behavior could be both at home and school, we are thrilled to share an additional cost associated with his inclusion. We pay big bucks for "Outstanding" marks in Citizenship on his report cards. When we made the deal, believe me, we did not anticipate ever having to pay up. This quarter, he presented us with an "O" in all six of his classes.

Don't let anyone kid you about the cost of inclusion. It's significant. It may even cost more when it's creative and well-planned. And it seems the longer you do it, the more it costs. Someone even contacted us to join the parents' club and the football boosters. We're easy marks, though...because it's the most fun we've ever had spending money.

P.S. I had hoped to enclose a picture of our son when he entered school the morning he wore his lettermen's jacket for the first time. I took the camera, but he was quickly lost in a sea of purple and white. Only I could have picked out the one who looked six inches taller than the day before!

—Down Syndrome News, September, 1992

Photocopied with permission

Information about the Parent-Educator Connection

PARENT-EDUCATOR CONNECTION

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

The Parent-Educator Connection program is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education. It began in 1984 to provide parents and educators with opportunities to work together in positive ways to improve educational programs for children with special needs. When genuine partnerships exist between parents and educators, quality planning and programming for children with disabilities will occur.

SERVICES

Each Area Education Agency (AEA) has a parent and an educator on staff who direct the program within the AEA. The Iowa State Department of Education employs a parent and an educator to provide assistance to each AEA.

The AEA and State Coordinators may:

- help parents and educators find answers to questions and locate resources
- conduct inservice sessions for parents and educators and other interested individuals
- facilitate meetings such as support groups
- publish newsletters
- loan books, pamphlets, and video and audio tapes on special education and other issues including different disabilities and parenting.

There is no cost for these and other services which may be provided by each AEA.

AGE REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY

Families with children, who have a disability, ages birth to twenty-one, educators and other individuals who work with people with disabilities may receive services.

CONTACT:

Your local AEA's Parent-Educator Coordinators
or
Iowa Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
(515) 281-3176
or
Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center Office
(515) 271-3936

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